Harrisburg 6 Group Assails New Subpoenas

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The National Defense Committee for the Harrisburg Six charged the FBI yesterday with "unusual and unwarrented harassment of possible defense witnesses" in the alleged plot to kidnap presidential adviser Henry Kissinger.

Their charge was directed at the subpoenaing of at least 26 additional witnesses who are to appear next week before the Harrisburg, Pa., federal grand jury investigating the case.

One of those subpoenaed Thursday, Thomas Phillips of New York, was asked by the FBI to become an informer against the movement a month ago, a Defense Committee spokesman in New York said. FBI agents allegedly returned a couple weeks later and told him that if he told the news media about their proposal he would be subpoenaed to appear before the grand jury.

Another person subpoenaed Thursday is Dr. Thomas Reeves, professor of political science at Mount St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Md., and former professor at American University and Federal City College.

Unlike the others Reeves was told by the agents who came to his Wolfsville, Md., farm that he himself was under investigation.

"They read a paper to me that said I was under investigation by the Justice Department for possible violation of federal anti-conspiracy laws," said Reeves.

He said agents also had asked administrators at his college for the names of all students in Reeves' classes. Such lists, he said, were shown to the agents but not given to them. The agents, said Reeves, told the college officials "they wanted to see the students' names because I had allegedly involved students as errand boys in a conspiracy."

Reeves is the former director of the National Council to Repeal the Draft, a major anti-draft lobby.

In their attack on the subpoenaing of persons who would possibly be defense witnesses, the Defense Committee in an official release, said:

"Calling these people, who might normally be witnesses for the defense, can be construed as an attempt by the government to discover what kind of defense will be provided for those indicted by the Harrisburg grand jury.

"Illegal use of the grand jury to obtain statements from witnesses for the defense after these witnesses had previously refused to talk with FBI agents is a total prostitution of the grand jury process."

Indictments against six persons were handed down Jan. 12 by the federal grand jury. The six defendants are the Rev. Philip Berrigan, now imprisoned at Danbury Federal Prison for destruction of draft records; Sister Elizabeth McAlister. New York; Eqbal Ahmad, Chicago, and Anthony Scoblick, the Rev. Neil McLaughlin and the Rev. Joseph Wenderoth, all of Baltimore.

The recent increase in use of subpoenas has resulted in added criticism by those close to the defense that the government is using the grand jury as a "fishing agency."

Since handing down indictments against the six, and naming seven others as co-conspirators, the grand jury has continued to investigate the case. It has been recessed since late February.